1659

THE PARLIAMENTS PLEA.

(16.)

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THE PARLIAMENTS PLEA:

OR

XX. REASONS

FOR THE

UNION

OF THE

PARLIAMENT & ARMY

Presented to Publick Consideration.

Wherein the whole Matter betwixt Parliament and Army is argued, and this new Interruption condemned.

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THE

Twenty Reasons for the Union of the Parliament and Army.

I.

THE People of *England* are of *Right* a free people to be governed by their *Deputies and Truſtees in Parliament*; It being owned and acknowledged on all hands both by Parliament and Army, and all the good People engaged with them, *That the People under God are the Original of all juſt Authority*, and other Original and Foundation no man may lay.

II.

That the people of this Nation who have contended againſt the King and his Party, for the juſt Freedome, Authority, and Right of Parliaments, with all other the Fundamentals of Common Right and Freedome, and are not Apoſtates from the ſame, are the only *legal free people*, and rightful immediate Heirs to that great Engliſh Birthright of Parliaments, the Enemies thereof to be exempted for a ſeaſon; a Principle of Right not to be denyed by the Parliament-people, and hath been owned and aſſerted by Sr. *Henry Vane* himſelf; See the Book called the *Healing Queſtion*.

III.

To deny or deprive *that people of this inheritance*, is Treason, Rebellion, and Apostacy from the Good Old Cause of the English Nation; for as much as a people free by *Birth*, by *Lawes*, and by their own fortitude, and prowess, are thereby rendered and made most absolute vassails, and slaves, at will and power; and greater Treason then this no man can commit.

IV.

This Parliament is the natural, legal, and true Majesterial head of *that Body of people*, being all digested, ranked and headed under *that Authority*; the Shackles of Kingship, single Person, and Peerage being knockt off, there is no other Authority *Civil* remaineth but *that*, this Parliament is the only remaining Branch, of the Peoples Authority, to whom of right belongeth the settlement of our Government: Therefore *that Head* is not to be severed from *this Body*, to wit, *that legal Authority from this legal People.*

V.

The Head of *England* is not compounded of Drums and Trumpets, of Swords and Musquets: *England* is a Nation of *Civil Sanctions* and constitution, to wit, of *Civil Magistracy, Lawes, and Government*: No Campagne of War to be governed by Lawes and Ordinances of War, or the *Votes of Army Officers in Council*:

Council: The Sword of *England* is to be subject to the Civil Authority of *England*, to be *servus servorum Populi Angliæ*, a servant to the servants of the People of *England*; for as tis said of fire and water, so tis with the Sword, *tis a good servant, but a bad Master.*

VI.

As this Parliament is the *only Relick of Civil Authority* amongst us, that we can lay claim or challenge unto, as of *popular Right and Derivation*; so from thence only all subordinate Powers and Administrations are to be, without which a *Legal new Parliament* cannot be regularly called: Law and Custom denies that Prerogative to the Sword. The Army as they cannot *de jure* disturb and interrupt the Freedom and succession of Parliaments, so *de jure* they cannot Summon a Parliament, nor impose a Government upon us, for as was said before, *The People of England are a Free People, the true Original of their own Authority.*

VII.

By this Parliament the Army was first raised, and became an Army, and by this Parliament wholy paid off before their first Interruption, and *by the Authority of Parliament can only be paid*; for to Leavy money upon the people without their consent in Parliament is not only high Treason, but meer Theft and Robery, for which every man that so Assesses, Collects, or gathers it, is to be indicted for his life, and must dye as a Traytor, not only by a late statute of this Parliament, but

but by the fundamental good old Lawes of the Land againſt which no by-Law is to be made; for tis a fundamental Law of *England*, *That no Tax or Levy is to be laid upon the people but by their conſent in Parliament*: This is one of the main Birth-rights of *England*, without which the people cannot be a free people: And therefore a neceſsity lies both upon People and Souldier to endeavour peace and compoſure twixt Parliament and Army, that the Army may be *legally payed*, and not put upon Fire and Sword, Plunder, Rapine, and Theft for their pay; a thing too deſperate and dangerous to be ventured in *England* for Army or People, and there is no other way without a return of this Parliament again for due prevention thereof.

VIII.

This Army was not only firſt raiſed and Commiſſioned by this Parliament, but alſo *re-commiſsioned and re-eſtabliſhed by this Parliament*; every Commiſsion Officer receiving his Commiſsion from the *Hand of their Speaker*, promiſing and engaging to be *true, faithful, and conſtant unto this Parliament*. This is that Army that have bewailed and repented their *former backſlidings from this Parliament*, have ſtiled and owned them, *the Supream Authority of the Commonwealth of* England, writing themſelves *their Army and faithful ſervants*, to wit, the great Officers themſelves who have *miſled* the inferiour Officers and private Souldiers into their *old Apoſtacy again*: Therefore how diſhonourable, abominable, and infamous is this new Diviſion and Separation betwixt Parliament and Army, and how criminal and wicked in the Army, let the World judg.

9. When

When this Parliament (that had been before interrupted by the Power and Command of the Great Officers for their ambitious ends only) found themselves and the very Interests of Parliaments it self in jeopardy of a *New Interruption and total Extinguishment for ever*, by a Confederacy and Combination of some of the Great Officers of the Army, and brought to that maturity, as the whole Army, or at least divers Regiments of the Army were by their means brought into the said Combination and Rebellion against the Parliament, the same having broken out into apparent and open Action, by subscribing and sending of Papers to that purpose to all the Officers in *England* and *Scotland*, no other being the tendance or intention thereof. So that this Parliament was even at the *last Gasp*, and no time left them to proceed judicially against the principal Actors, Contrivers and Abettors thereof, therefore attempted to Vote the Grand Actors in the Plot out of their Commissions, to wit, *Lambert*, *Disbrow*, and the rest, for Conservation and Safety of Parliament and People, against the exorbitant rebellious Domination of the Sword, as knowing that their Dissolution by force, was a total Dissolution and Extinguishment of all Civil Authority in *England*, and an absolute subjection of the People under the Sword, with a total loss of Parliaments for ever, the very essential matter and ground-work of the Freedoms of *England*. So that in this Necessity, Crisis and Exigency of time,

they were bound in Duty, Honour and Conscience without delay, immediately to lay hands on these Great Officers, *That would turn the Cannon of their Army against them*; to cashier those Servants that would turn out their Masters the Parliament of *England*, and take possession themselves; and being at this *forced out*, are therefore justified by the Laws of God, of Nature, Nations, Reason and Necessity; and from the principles of common Peace, Justice and Safety of the People, the *very End of Government*.

Further, The Power of *Making War or Peace, raising or disbanding of Armies*; and consequently of making and cashiering of Officers, *rests only in Parliaments*, and the Will of the People in Parliament sufficeth therein; 'tis reason enough, and conclusive against the particulars.

X.

It cannot be thought reasonable or tollerable, that Nine Great Officers of the Army should be put in the Balance and Competition with the Parliaments and Civil Authority of *England*; and that rather then lose their Commissions, *England* must lose their Parliaments and be made subject to the Sword; no English man can (but with Impudence and Treason) affirm it: and yet this is the maine Argument they have in their Plea, *The cashiering those Officers*; and therefore the *Parliament must be cashiered*; and because Major Gen. *Harrison* was voted from all Publick Office and Employment; therefore they *must not*

 sit,

ſit; with ſuch like Reaſoning as this: But how Factious, Rebellious, Seditious and Monſtrous that Argument is, let the World judg.

The Private Soldier gains nothing by this Apoſtacy and Defection, they are only made uſe of, and thus miſled for the ambitious ends only of ſome of their aſpiring Officers: Why therefore ſhould the Private Soldier thus ſtand off from the Parliament, but rather return to his Obedience and Duty to owe them. Let every Officer and Soldier engaged in this buſineſs lay his hand on his heart, and conſider how in conſcience and reaſon he can ſhed the Innocent blood of his brethren, the Free People of *England* in the Cauſe of thoſe Officers againſt the Parliament? The Cauſe of the Nation is on the ſide of the Parliament and nothing but Ambition and Self-intereſt on the ſide of the Officers, and amongſt them can be no certain fixation and agreement; the ambition of one will eat up and devour the ambition of another; one envying, ſupplanting, trepanning and deluding the other. For can it be otherwiſe thought, but that *Lambert* hath the ſame deſign againſt *Fleetwood*, as old *Oliver* had againſt *Fairfax*; and ſo of all the great Officers, as their ſeveral aimes and intereſts are pointed and intended, no truſt or truth can be expected amongſt them, and in all their ſhifting and turnings the life of the poor Soldier muſt be at ſtake; it is he that muſt bear the heat and brunt of the day, and all that he gets for his paines, is but a few faire and flattering words of his ſmooth tongued Officer aforehand, with promiſes of Pay, or the like; and yet ſtill muſt remain but a *Poor Soldier*, left to the ignominy, reproach

and curse of his Countrey for a reward; whereas if as Free-men of *England*, your Arms be improved for the Freedomes of *England*, under the just Authority of Parliament, you will be justified before God and man, be the praise of the Country, and beloved of all, be blessed in this life, and in the life to come: Up therefore and be doing; The Parliament and People command, invite and call for your help, you can never be engaged in a more honourable work; The Parliament and people are taken Captive and *Prisoners of War*, and 'tis in your power to deliver and set us free from this thraldome and bondage.

XI.

Though there were never so many failings and evils in this Parliament, yet is it no Argument or Reason that we must be deprived of our Parliaments and Civil Authority, and subjected to the bloudy Domination of the Sword. It is not denied, but that both Officers and Souldiers have *the Right of Petitioning*, but not the Right of *Disturbing*, *Dissolving*, *or Suppressing of Parliaments*: Had they only endeavoured a *Redress of the Evils in Parliament*, it had been tollerable and justifiable by the same Rules and Reason they formerly impeached the Eleven Members; but to suppress even *the Parliament it self*, to shake off the Reins of *Civil Government*, and set up the *Martial in its stead*, is not to be endured, but for ever to be abhorred and abominated: How therefore are the Souldiery, that are thus mis-led into this *horrid Rebellion*,

Rebellion, engaged and obliged to clear themſelves from the continuance and guilt thereof?

XII.

Whatever is ſetled beſide, and without the *Peoples common conſent in Parliament*, cannot, in Reaſon, be fixed or durable, or hold to the next Generation: For as thoſe great Officers alter and change, or get advantages one of another, ſo will our Government alter and change; and that which is brought in and planted by the Sword, muſt be kept by the Sword; ſo that by this way of *Obtruſion by the Sword*, nothing but *Violence and the Sword* can be expected, no hope of Deliverance from the Iron yoke of an Army: And it is a ſure Rule, That that People which are under the ſole Domination of an Army, cannot be a free People; for though nothing can be done without Arms, yet if thoſe Arms be not in the hand of the People, no Freedome can be expected: And therefore the diviſion of the Army from the Civil Authority is to be ſtopt, if poſſibly it may.

XIII.

If the Army perſiſt in this interruption, an abſolute diviſion of the good people of *England*, that have been engaged for the intereſt of Parliaments againſt the King, yea, of the Army it ſelf, muſt certainly follow, as is moſt apparent both in *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland* already; *ſome for the Parliament*, *ſome for the Army*; ſome to be Free-men, others,

others to make Slaves, which will of neceſſity not only open a gap to the King and his party, but to the invaſion of foreign Nations, now making ready againſt us, to take us in confuſion: And therefore in point of common ſafety, the compoſure of Parliament and Army is to be endeavoured.

And further conſider, Though the Army be in a great meaſure involved, and *the Name of the Army* be uſed; yet no part of *the Cauſe of the Army* is in it, except *the Cauſe about the Nine Commiſſions be it*: Certainly, this matter was not in their *ſolemn Engagement at* Newmarket *and* Triplo *Heath*; Nor is it found in any of their *Remonſtrances, Declarations, or Papers* ſince; if any will urge it now, as indeed ſome take the confidence to do, and that in the *Name of the Army*, how is this Army rendred by ſuch? we leave it to the Souldiery to judge and apply; We hope the more ſober and conſcientious amongſt them will take it to heart, and be ingenious therein, *and chooſe the better part*, rather to leave the Nine Officers and their Nine Commiſſions, then the Parliament and the people of *England*; for truly, if they do but rightly weigh the matter, *they owe thoſe Nine no Allegiance, Duty, or Obedience*; for that which gave thoſe Nine a juſt Authority to *Lead, Conduct, and Command*, is *cut aſunder*, and they are under no Authority, and Obedience belongs not to them; yea, ſo far is it from that, *that he that Obeys, Rebels in this Caſe*, there is no tie in Law, in Conſcience, or common Right, to be ſubject to them; *their Reſolves, Votes and Commands oblige not at all*, except the *High-way-man*'s Argument muſt be admitted, *Stand and Deliver.*

14. It

XIV.

It is in vain to think that *England* will part with their *great Birth-right of Parliaments*, were all the ſeparate Churches bewitched and ſeduced by *Vanes* Inſinuation and Policy (for ſcarce any man elſe will believe him now) yet that would ſignifie nothing to the great Intereſt of *England*; for the *juſt Intereſt of Parliament is the true Intereſt of* England.

And in this Diviſion betwixt Parliament and Army, the great Officers (eſpecially the nine Subſcribers) muſt be engaged *in point of their own ſafety*, to preſs forward, and go on in what they have done, even to obliterate and extinguiſh the *very name and being of Parliaments*, and whoever joyns and ſaies Amen to the work, may the fierce vengeance of the great People of *England* fall on them, and cruſh them to pieces, ſcatter and diſperſe them, and certainly it will: The work is too hard for them, and never to be done; all that have attempted the ſame, have fallen in the way, and yet attempt it they muſt, *or elſe periſh by that Intereſt*; ſo that upon this ſcore, upon this Interruption, *with Parliaments, or againſt Parliaments*, their ruine impendeth: And therefore in tenderneſs to thoſe Officers (if any tenderneſs be to be had towards them) an early compoſure ought to be endeavoured.

XV.

The private Souldier is *as much an Engliſh man* as the *greateſt Officer*, both *co-heirs* to one and the ſame

same Birthright, that is to say *to the Laws, Liberties, and free customes of* England, equal and alike: And therefore in this sad and strange Overture, wherein the private Souldiery were engaged and concerned (and without whom the great Officers can do nothing) they are bound in duty to themselves, and posterities, and to the Nation in general, to make *a strict and speedy inspection into the matter*, to know wherein, and in whom the fault lies, and to remove the Obstruction.

We can discern no other but an apparent Design of Ambition and Domination of some few *to Kingit again as before*, or else by degrees so to order and wheel the matter about, to bring in the *Family of the Stuarts*, and there at last to shelter, settle, and secure themselves in the publick Destruction of all the zealous opposers of that Interest; various and strange are the thoughts and fears of the good people about it; but the vulgar and common voice is, *That a new fashioned Kingship, or the old is in the bottom of this Plot*; and *vox populi* is *vox Dei*, *the voyce of the people ever presageth the truth.* When the Parliament gave *Lambert* his Commission, this issue that is now come to pass was the general opinion of all; many instances of this kind might be mentioned, but one is enough to the wise.

XVI.

Without doubt the present incumbent duty upon the Souldiery is not to run *hand over head* after the Grand Officers, and never ask why, nor wherefore, but

but rather to *make an halt, ſtand and conſider*, leaſt unawares they be involved in the common deſtruction of all. And therefore (*to provide a Bar againſt the worſt*) it were but neceſſary (*and what is much more the Right of every Regiment, then to be commanded at the will of the Grand Officers in thoſe civil concernments of ſo dangerous a kind*) to chooſe two out of every Regiment for Conſideration of this horrid Separation of Parliament and Army, that if it be poſſible there may be a right underſtanding about it, the Parliament return to the diſcharge of their remaining truſt, and the Army to their duty and due obedience as before.

XVII.

Since the reaſſembly of this Parliament, (*which was by the unanimous deſire and conſent of the well affected in all parts*,) they cannot be charged with the breach of their *Parliament truſt*, ſo as any wayes to forfeit the *Right of their Seſſion*, or to juſtifie the Army in this *new Interruption*, for having not perverted *the end of their Seſſion*, the common Good, Peace, Freedome, Juſtice, and Safety of the People, *their diſturbance cannot be juſtified*. Had they turned Traitors to their truſt, and in ſtead of the *common good of the whole* had attempted a *publick deſtruction of all*, then ſomething of reaſon and neceſſity might fairly be urged, yet not to be made uſe of to the deſtruction of Parliaments, or diſſolving the method of that Authority, but rather for correction and amendment of what was amiſs.

Now as to their carriage and execution of their truſt in their *laſt Seſſion* it is known of all, that they were ſufficiently induſtrious for ſuppreſſion of *Boothe's Inſurrection* in the North, and in all the Countries in *England*, for the ſettlement of the *Militia in the hands of the beſt affected*, and for Extirpation of all prerogative Powers, of *Kingſhip*, *ſingle Perſon*, *and Perage*, and to ſettle this Nation in the way of a *Free Common-wealth*: And knowing by late ſad and woful experience that *Generalſhip* and *Kingſhip* are ſo *near a kin*, that the Admiſſion of the one, is the Introduction of the other over us, and therefore wiſely and juſtly, (as looking upon that as indeed it is, the *very life and verticle point of all*) they made all proviſion that in the compaſs of reaſon could be, their condition conſidered, againſt the *way of a General*: And not only ſo, but were making a moſt ſecure and abſolute proviſion for *Liberty of Conſcience*, as the like never was in *England* before; And ſetling a juſt and due proviſion *for paiment of the Arrears of the Army without any Tax upon the People*, a work of great prudence and honeſty, and worthy the praiſe, and grateful acknowledgment of all, and did abſolutely enact, *That no monies ſhould be raiſed upon the People but by their conſent in Parliament, or as by Law might have been done before the* 3d *of November*, 1640. And if this be to forfeit their Seſſion, and juſtifie this new Interruption, then let us acknowledg, *that wrong is right, and right wrong*,

18. This

XVIII.

This Parliament was ſo much *under the force and power of the Sword*, during the time of this *laſt ſitting*, that they could not be ſo forward as was expected or deſired in *ſetling the Government*: Other deſigns all along being in the heads and aime of ſome of the great Officers which obſtructed the work; the fault was not in the Parliament, but by the Interpoſition and influence of thoſe Officers being mingled in all their Counſels and debates, and thereby came privily a ſlack and retardment upon all their proceedings, and what ever they gained, or paſt, was with great difficulty: And when thoſe Officers ſaw that the Parliaments patience with their devices and tricks, was even worn off, and that their deſign was ſpied out, notwithſtanding all their meanders, their crooked inſinuations and craft, and that the Parliament could not be brought to a compliance to their ambitious ends, but went on with courage and reſolution, to do the work of their Country. Thoſe Officers conclude upon their interruption again, acting the ſame with a moſt inſolent hand of Hoſtillity. And therefore the honeſt Officers and Souldiers ought to lay this to heart, and to make a ſtrict and ſpeedy inquiry into the thing, which if they put themſelves into a Capacity to do, moſt evident and clear ſatisfaction herein will be given by the Members themſelves.

XIX.

The Army must either be *a Cavalier Army, a Foreign Army, or a Parliament Army:*

The work of a Cavalier Army, *is to reduce us to the Government of Kingship and Peerage, as of old.*

And that of a Foreign Army, *is by the dint of Sword to subject us to the Iron Yoke of an imposed Government, to thrust some Foreign Prince, or some Foreign Form of Government, by way of a Co-ordinate Power, Senate for Life, Single Person, or the like upon us.*

But the Work of a Parliament Army, *is to be subject to the Authority of Parliament, in the settlement of this Commonwealth in the way of a Free State, without Kingship, Single Person, Peerage, Co-dinate Power, or Senate for Life, or other Arbitrary or Persecuting Power whatsoever, that the just Authority of Parliaments, the Good Old Laws and Liberties of* England *may be saved, settled, and secured unto us.*

And therefore it is but reasonable and fit, that the Souldiery, before any further proceeding in this new Interruption, should take the Essentials of this matter into consideration: Surely, *the work of a Cavalier Army, or Foreign Army,* is not in their thoughts, whatever some of their leading great Officers may intend; and if they own themselves *a Parliament Army,* let them return, *and do the works meet for a Parliament Army.*

If they say, They are *the Nations Army, or the Peoples*

Peoples Army, that cannot be, if they be not ſubject *to the Authority of the Nation and People in Parliament*; for that's the Authority of the Land: If they rip up the womb that bore them, and brought them forth, and thus murther this Parliament, what is it that they can do? for the Conduit-pipes of the peoples Authority are cut off, and without that Authority they can do nothing, but upon *the principles of Rebellion and Treaſon*.

Therefore, however it is urged by ſome, That an *other Number of Men* beſides that Parliament are fitteſt for this exigency of Affairs, by the Rules of Prudence, Juſtice, and Right; if it be ſo, it muſt bee by other kinde of Prudence, Juſtice, and Right, then is taught by the Law of God, the Light of Nature, or the Laws and Birthrights of *England*; for no where ſuch a kind of Rebellion as this can be juſtified, where Nine Commiſſions are put in compariſon with the whole Authority and People of *England*, and muſt over-top them: Indeed they ſay *Nine is a Witch*; and of this we may juſtly ſay, That their *Rebellion is as the ſin of Witchcraft*, from which, the Lord deliver us.

Brethren, and fellow Free-men of the *Army*, *We conjure you in the Name of God, in the Name of the Parliament and People of* England, *to allay this Infernal Fiend of Rebellion, and depart from that Circle of Sorcery and Witchcraft, and return home to the good Houſe of Parliament, to guard and defend it againſt all oppoſers whatſoever*; that we may proceed regularly to ſuch a firm Foundation of Settlement by way of *An Agreement of the People*, to be ſubſcribed

bed by the Parliament, Army, and People, as all may be secured in their *just Rights and Liberties both Civil and Religious*, as is most wisely and justly proposed to the Parliament, and recommended to the Councel of the Army by the well-affected of the County of *Gloucester*, to whose printed Petition and Address, we refer you for further satisfaction therein.

XX.

Lastly, If the Sword be singled from the Civil Authority, as it must be, if thus engaged against Parliaments, there is no other issue can come of this Division then *Monarchy*, and *Monarchy* cannot be but the *aspiring Person* must betake himself to the *principles of Persecution*; for though at present he be but a *Lamb*----- yet at last he must turn *Lyon*, *Wolf*, *Bear*, *or such other Beast of Prey*; for the Pulpit he must oblige, or lose his Ends; no *Crown* in this Nation is to be worn, but the Pulpit must be *advanced*, and the *advancement* of the Pulpit lets in *Persecution*; for the *Interest of the Clergy* is inconsistent with the *Toleration of Sects*.

Die Jovis 27. October, 1649.

Divers Members of Parliament upon Consideration of a Petition brought unto them by divers well affected persons in and about the Cities of *London*, *Westminster*, *&c.* being directed to the Councel of State, by Authority of Parliament, which continued their Session some few dayes after this new Interruption, and by reason the said Petitioners were obstructed in their Presentation thereof, through the too sudden expiration of the Council; therefore the said members upon the humble desire of the Petitioners, by special Permission, Ordered, That together with the Plea, the said Petition should be printed and published, and recommended to the Consideration of the Souldiery of the Army, and to the Nation in general.

An Address intended to have been presented to the Councel of State appointed by Authority of Parliament, and now recommended to the People and Army of England. *Sheweth,*

THat your Petitioners being astonished at this sudden, sad, & unexpected *Interruption of that Parliament*, which Almighty God, through various

various providences and wonderful successes both at home and abroad, hath so *signally owned and highly honoured*, and whose return to the further discharge of their Trust was not more wonderful in it self then matter of joy and rejoycing not only to the Army it self (if we may believe their Demonstrations in word and writings published) but likewise to all the good people in the Nation, as by their *Addresses* and *Applications* to them out of *several* Countries, may and doth appear, *they were even received as life from the dead.*

And being also deeply sensible of the misery, unsetledness, poverty and slavery which fell upon us and the whole Nation during the time of their *Absence from the Government*, when no lawful Parliament Authority was in *Being*, to give check to *Will and Power*, and to order the Publick Affairs of the Commonwealth.

And considering likewise, that notwithstanding the vast sums of mony then levied, besides the contracting an unparallel'd debt, and many strange attempts both by Sea and Land, that this Nation never in so short a time suffered so exceedingly in its honour, trade traffick, peace and prosperity as then it did; as if God by blasting all Counsels, and undertakings not managed by lawful Authority intended to instruct the good people of this Nation, never to expect a good issue from any irregular proceedings.

Your Petitioners laying these things to heart, together with the Parliaments just resolves to govern this Nation in the way of a Free State and Commonwealth, without a single Person, Kingship, or House of Peeres, and to maintain the Rights and Liberties of all, *both as Men and Christians*: And in order thereunto *they delivered many Captives, and set the oppressed free, restored many to their places and imployments both in Army and Navy, and elsewhere, who had been in their absence by Arbitrary illegal powers unjustly excluded, voted a Period to their own Session, made all possible speed to settle the Government (so far as the Armies Proposals, Petitions, Representations and Papers would admit) upon Annual and new Elective Parliaments, with such strict qualifications and reserves, as might preserve us from future bondage to any single Person, Kingship, Peerage, or Persecution.*

And who upon the late Northern Rebellion ordered such Commissioners for the Militia of *London*, and most parts of the Nation, as manifested a firm resolution in them against all tyrannous and persecuting Interests.

These evident and weighty Consideration, and the sad fear of the loss of all Lawful Parliaments, and all true English Rights and Freedomes with them, in case this Parliament (which God avert) should be thus extinguished and rendred unserviceable, hath moved us in most humble manner earnestly to entreat

That you would be pleased to invite and perswade (which we judg and conceive to be the most hopeful, if not only Expedient of Safety) That forty Members of Parliament, qualified with most indifferency, may give a meeting to the like number of the Members of the Army, qualified with the like indifferency, to debate, consider and reconcile all differences between them, and to use their utmost endeavor to beget such a right understanding, if possible, that this Parliament may again return to the Free Exercise of their Authority, in setling the Government of this Nation as aforesaid, and the Officers and Soldiers of the Army, and all other the good People of this Nation receive full Satisfaction in and to all their just and reasonable desires and expectations; that so the ruines sadly threatned by this destructive division may yet through the mercy and goodness of Almighty God be effectually and speedily prevented.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall ever pray, &c.

FINIS.